

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-05 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00  
DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 PER-01  
A-01 SY-05 MED-02 AID-05 SIL-01 LAB-04 HEW-04  
/076 W

-----099118 291434Z /43

R 290757Z AUG 77

FM AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7108

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E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, SWEL, AG

SUBJ: DOCTORS JOIN STRIKES IN ALGERIA

REF: ALGIERS 2165

1. ALGERIAN AND FOREIGN DOCTORS TELL US THAT STRIKE OF DOCTORS IN GOVERNMENT HOSPITALS IN ALGIERS AND ELSEWHERE BEGAN AGUSUT 24 AND CONTINUES, WITH TREATMENT RESTRICTED TO EMERGENCY CASES. COMPLAINTS OF DOCTORS CENTER AROUND LOW SALARIES, PROHIBITION AGAINST PRIVATE PRACTICE, ABSENCE OF HOUSING AND OTHER FRINGE BENEFITS, AND LACK OF LEGAL STATUS OR PROTECTION.

2. AS PART OF FURTHER SOCIALIZATION OF PUBLIC SERVICES, GOA SOME TIME AGO DECREED THAT NEW MEDICAL GRADUATES WOULD NO LONGER BE PERMITTED TO SUPPLEMENT PUBLIC SERVICE WITH PRIVATE MEDICAL PRACTICE. IN EXCHANGE, DOCTORS WERE PROMISED SUBSTANTIAL SALARY INCREASE AND OTHER FRINGE BENEFITS. GOA HAS, HOWEVER, FAILED TO COME THROUGH. DOCTORS' SALARIES, WHICH UNTIL RECENTLY WERE 2,500 ALGERIAN DINARS PER MONTH, HAVE BEEN RAISED TO ONLY DA2,800 (US\$700) IN SPITE OF DOCTORS' DEMAND THAT SALARIES BE INCREASED TO DA5,000 PER MONTH. UNLIKE OTHER GROUPS WITHIN ALGERIAN TECHNOCRACY, DOCTORS DO NOT RECEIVE HOUSING AND OTHER FRINGE BENEFITS AND ARE PROVIDED NO LEGAL  
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PROTECTION FROM MEMBERS OF PUBLIC, SOME OF WHOM HAVE BEEN KNOWN TO ASSAULT THEM WHEN THEY REFUSED TO FALSIFY MEDICAL REPORTS.

3. SITUATION IS EXACERBATED BY AD HOC CONTRACTURAL DEALS MADE BY FOREIGN DOCTORS WORKING FOR GOA AND NATIONAL CORPORATIONS. THESE TYPICALLY RECEIVE MUCH HIGHER SALARIES THAN ALGERIAN DOCOTRS IN ADDITION TO HOUSING AND OTHER FRINGE BENEFITS. NET RESULT IS GREAT

DISSATISFACTION AMONG ALGERIAN DOCTORS, ESPECIALLY NEW GRADUATES WITHOUT ESTABLISHED PRIVATE PRACTICE, AND SIGNIFICANT EMIGRATION TO FRANCE, WHERE 1000 ALGERIAN DOCTORS ARE REPORTEDLY ALREADY ESTABLISHED.

4. WE ARE TOLD THAT DELEGATION FROM MEDICAL ASSOCIATION REQUESTED MEETING WITH MINISTER OF HEALTH AIT MESSAOUDENE SEVERAL DAYS AGO TO DISCUSS GRIEVANCES AND THAT HE REFUSED FLATLY TO SEE THEM. POLICE ARE NOW REPORTEDLY REOUNDING UP STRIKING DOCTORS WHO HAVE NOT COME TO MILITARY SERVICE, LOADING THEM INTO VANS, AND TAKING THEM TO NEARBY MILITARY CAMPS TO BEGIN THEIR MILITARY SERVICE.

5. GOVERNMENT-OWNED ALGERIAN DAILY "ASH-SHA'B" ATTACKED "MENTALITY OF DEMANDING RIGHTS" IN FRONT PAGE EDITORIAL AUGUST 28. OBVIOUSLY ADDRESSING ITSELF TO ALL GROUPS THAT HAVE RECENTLY BEEN STRIKING, PAPER ADMITTED THERE SEEMS TO BE LACK OF SOCIAL CONSCIENCE AMONG CERTAIN GROUPS AND WARNED THAT THIS CONFLICTS WITH DEMOCRATIC AND SOCIALIST SYSTEM. IT CAUTIONED DARKLY THAT "THIS REVOLUTION KNOWS WHAT IT WANTS AND WHERE IT IS GOING, AND ANYONE WHO TESTS ITS PATIENCE WILL FIND THAT ITS TOLERANCE IS NO SIGN OF WEAKNESS AND THAT VERY THIN LINE KEEPS IT FROM STRIKING ITS ENEMIES."

6. COMMENT: THIS IS BUT LATEST OF SERIES OF STRIKES THAT HAVE EMERGED IN ALGERIA RECENTLY. AS HAS BEEN CASE WITH OTHERS, LOCAL MEDIA HAVE MADE NO DIRECT MENTION OF ITS OCCURRENCE, BUT POPULACE IS WELL AWARE IT IS TAKING PLACE. AIT MESSAOUDENE, WHO HAS A REPUTATION AS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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HARDNOSED, EFFICIENT ADMINISTRATOR, WAS APPOINTED MINISTER OF HEALTH IN APRIL TO IMPROVE QUALITY OF HEALTH CARE. STRIKE COMPLICATES HIS TASK, BUT IT IS LIKELY HE WILL COME UP WITH SOME PARTIAL SOLUTION TO KEEP LID ON. HAYNES

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## Message Attributes

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**Capture Date:** 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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**TAGS:** PINT, SWEL, AG  
**To:** STATE  
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**Review Markings:**  
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